

CHALLENGES TO LANCASTER SUPPORTERS

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Since 2011 I have been hearing from church members who are being mistreated by their pastors because they don't agree with what Lancaster Baptist Church in Lancaster, California, (home of West Coast Baptist College) is doing in regard to the adaptation of contemporary worship music.

Consider an example.

A pastor has taken to "blasting" me from the pulpit because he has a family who is resisting the church's contemporary direction in music. This family has refused to sing contemporary worship songs by Getty/Townend and others. They have done this quietly without talking around to try to cause trouble among the members, but they cannot in good conscience sing these songs. They told the music director personally, and that was all. The husband said, "I told my wife that, since I did not want to cause divisions, we would not talk to anyone about the reasons for my decision, and we didn't."

Even so, the pastor has made this family feel very uncomfortable by saying that questioning the pastor is evidence of a critical spirit and that being concerned about things such as "beat anticipation" is to "waste time about minor things while souls are dying and going to hell."

Last year this pastor had seemed to agree with my warnings, but after he attended a conference at Lancaster he developed a bad attitude toward me personally and toward my ministry and toward those who listen to me. He is now treating me as an enemy of good churches and an underminer of pastoral authority.

The pastor preached a sermon that appeared to be directed toward that faithful family. The husband testified as follows of how he felt when his own pastor treated him like some sort of enemy of the truth:

"I don't think I have ever felt so despised and worthless as I did at the end of that sermon. Just as he never mentioned your name when blasting away at you, he never mentioned my name when blasting away at me. But it was obvious to everyone involved in the music ministry, and perhaps to some others as well, EXACTLY who he was talking about. He stood up there and mocked me for 'taking a stand' on such a supposedly trivial issue. He accused me of being more loyal to an 'Internet pastor' than to himself. He accused me of being unsubmitive to pastoral authority and causing divisions. He accused me of thinking that I'm 'more spiritual' than everyone else. He even implied that my actions were somehow preventing people from being saved."

BLACKLISTED AND FORCED OUT OF CHURCHES

This reminds me of what churches have done when the leaders have decided to push the Purpose Driven philosophy. Rick Warren openly advised pastors to push people out if they resist the contemporary program, and many have been orphaned as a result. It appears that some Lancaster supporters have the same Diotrephes spirit as Rick Warren supporters. In fact, I am convinced that they are all going in the same direction, though at least Rick Warren doesn't pretend to be a "fundamentalist."

Too, this reminds me of what happened in the late 1980s when many IFB pastors pushed the "100% Hyles" campaign. Church members were mistreated and driven out for not supporting Hyles. Preachers were attacked merely for asking questions about Hyles, and those who openly opposed Hyles were blacklisted. A case in point was Roger Voegtlin, Pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Chesterton, Indiana, who refused to shut his eyes and ears to Hyles' sin and error.

"Just after the public exposure [of Hyles], we tried to get meetings for our preachers in California, and word was spread of where I stood and we were blackballed in the state of California. I called up the fellow that was blackballing us and I said why don't you at least read the article? He refused" (Roger Voegtlin, "Why I Am Not 100% for Hyles," June 25, 1989).

Pastor Voegtlin and his people were blacklisted by Jack Trieber of North Valley Baptist Church in Santa Clara, California, who promoted the 100% Hyles position. By the way, Paul Chappell, as Trieber's youth pastor, was right in the middle of that idolatrous mess.

THE INDEPENDENT BAPTIST MUSIC WARS

This is the type of thing that is happening widely in IFB churches. The "music war" that raged in Southern Baptist and "evangelical" churches 40 years ago is raging in IFBaptist churches today. Unless there is a mighty spiritual revival in the IFB churches, the result is going to be the same. Very few will be left standing when the war is over.

What is happening is that a dramatic and very serious corner has been turned. The use of contemporary worship music is now acceptable as long as it is not too wild, and Lancaster has a big hand in this.

The sad fruit of this great compromise is going to be evident in every church that follows this course and that pretends that this is a "small" issue and a matter of mere "preference." Once a church turns this corner, the changes in music will be swift and it will be reflected throughout the life of the church. It will be reflected in the youth and in the families.

To "adapt" contemporary worship music is to build bridges to a very dangerous world, which is, openly and proudly, the world of the one-world church.

This is a major reason why I am saying that within a generation most IFB churches will be well down the emerging road. Churches such as those we have described above are already taking the first steps, even while still claiming to be “fundamental” and “separated” and “strong” and “uncompromising.”

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1. The Bible warns, He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him” (Prov. 18:13). If you haven’t watched the video presentations “The Transformative Power of Contemporary Praise Music” and “The Foreign Spirit of Contemporary Worship Music” you haven’t heard my warning. At least take the time to hear the warning and to educate yourself about the heart of the issue before you make a decision. If you think you understand the issue of the adaptation of contemporary worship music by reading an article or two, you are wrong. You have to HEAR and SEE this one to understand it. If you aren’t willing to hear me out, then you can’t possibly make a proper decision as to whether I am speaking the truth and you should refrain from expressing an opinion on the matter. These video presentations can be ordered on DVD or downloaded for free in eVideo format from the Way of Life web site.

2. Many pastors admit they don’t know much if anything about the contemporary worship musicians and the world they represent. If that is you, I would ask why don’t you take the time to read *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*, which contains extensive and rare documentation collected over a period of 40 years. We have made this expensive book available as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org.

3. Why is the heart and soul of my warning being consistently ignored? I have not said that it is wrong for churches to use music other than that written by Baptists. I have not said that syncopation is always wrong. I have not said that everyone must conform to the type of music I use. I have not said that it is wrong to use guitars or banjos or even drums. I have not said there isn’t a wide variety of music that can be called sacred and that can be acceptable. I personally enjoy sacred music as varied as from Hale & Wilder to the Marshall’s.

My warning is this: the world of contemporary worship music is the world of the end-time, one-world church, and that those who use it are building bridges to that most dangerous world, bridges over which individuals, families and eventually the entire church will cross. My warning is that using contemporary worship is nothing like using old Protestant hymns, such as those by Luther or Wesley or Crosby.

Using Luther’s “Our Mighty Fortress” has never turned a Baptist church into a Lutheran one, to my knowledge, but using CCM has been at the very heart of turning large numbers of once-separatist Baptist churches into contemporary ones in my very lifetime.

Do you believe I should stop warning about this?

4. If I have said something in error against Lancaster Baptist Church that constitutes “gossip,” why won’t someone tell me exactly what it is so I can correct it?

5. If it is true that the problem at Lancaster Baptist Church in 2011 was that Paul Chappell was sick and let a couple of CCM songs slip through the cracks during his illness, why did the church use charismatic-ecumenical CCM for years before 2011 and why have they continued to use it? The adaptation of CCM at Lancaster/West Coast is far reaching and extends back many years. Following are a few examples of CCM songs that have been used there:

“Hallelujah to the Lamb” by Don Moen (who thinks God is the author of the weird charismatic “laughing revival”)

“In Christ Alone” by Getty/Townend

“Word of God Speak” by MercyMe (a charismatic mystical song)

“Stronger” and “Shout to the Lord” by Zschech/Hillsong (performed by Lancaster’s high school mixed ensemble; Hillsong performed for Catholic Youth Day and Pope Benedict)

“Majesty, Worship His Majesty” by Jack Hayford (a Pentecostal Kingdom Now anthem; Hayford says God told him not to preach against the Roman Catholic church)

“Great Is the Lord” and “How Majestic Is Your Name” by Michael W. Smith (who has been “slain in the Spirit” and “laughed uncontrollably, “rolling on the floor ... hyperventilating”)

“Faithful Men” by Twila Paris (who works with the Roman Catholic Kathy Troccoli and with ecumenist Robert Webber, who promotes unity between evangelicals and Catholics)

“In Christ Alone” by Michael English (who spent the 1990s and early 2000s committing adultery with another man’s wife, bar hopping, dating a stripper, and undergoing “rehab” for drug addiction)

Songs by Steven Curtis Chapman (the most honored “high energy Christian rocker” of the 1990s who says he doesn’t preach “fire and brimstone” and describes God as “Lord of the Dance”)

Songs by Geron Davis (“Jesus Only” Pentecostal who denies the Trinity)

“I Will Rise” by Chris Tomlin (a member of an emerging church that seeks to build the kingdom in this present world)

Songs by Graham Kendrick (charismatic founder of the radically ecumenical Jesus March that includes Catholics and Mormons)

“Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)” by Chris Tomlin was performed at Lancaster Sunday morning, Oct. 9, 2011

“Not Guilty” by the jazz CCM artist Mandisa was performed at the 2011 Leadership Conference

“Above All Things” by Rebecca St. James (covered on West Coast Baptist College’s “For the Faith of the Gospel” CD)

“Glorify You Alone” by Gateway Worship (March 2012)

“Step by Step” by Rich Mullins (Youth Conference 2012, Mullins was in the process of converting to Rome when he died)

In *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians* we have provided extensive documentation that the aforementioned individuals and groups are charismatic one-world church builders.

To my knowledge, no one at Lancaster or West Coast has publicly said that it was wrong for them to use this music, that they have set a poor example, and that they have built dangerous bridges. There has been no public repentance about this very public issue. To the contrary, they have continued to justify the use of contemporary worship music.

6. If you hear something against me personally, why don't you ask me if the matter is true? Let me at least have an opportunity to answer for myself. Someone has started a whispering campaign against me, turning a doctrinal issue into a personal one, and like the works of the devil, it is subtle and secret rather than clear and open. What I have had to say about Lancaster's music I have said plainly and I have said openly and I have said graciously, if forcefully. Why not give me the same consideration?

7. Why have I been characterized widely as a mean-spirited man, a mere "blogger," a man who is not a "soul winner," a man who majors on the minors, and as a person who pushes personal preferences, when these things are false and slanderous?

8. Where did you get the idea that no public warnings should be given in regard to "good" men and churches? That is one of the vain and unscriptural traditions that IFBaptists have inherited from their forefathers. Jesus reproved the good church at Ephesus, for the very reason that He loved it and wanted to see it prosper and not be destroyed. Paul reproved the good preacher Peter because he loved Christ and the truth and didn't want to see hypocrisy destroy the work of God. The prophet Jehu reproved the good king Jehoshaphat for his compromise because God commanded him to do so and the prophet feared God more than man.

9. If you are going to criticize me as "an Internet pastor" and "a blogger" who interferes in the business of local churches, why don't you criticize Paul Chappell and other men for influencing multitudes of churches that they do not pastor? These men host conferences with the express purpose of influencing churches around the world. They blog. They publish books. They publish music. They publish their sermons. They broadcast their services. They even influence churches in South Asia where our church planting work is located. If you are going to criticize me on some point, at least be consistent. Otherwise, it appears that you are merely creating a smokescreen behind which to hide your compromise.

10. If it is wrong to concern ourselves with the composition of contemporary music and things like "beat anticipation" and "non-resolving cadence," why does the Bible warn that a LITTLE leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

11. If using CCM is safe and is a "minor issue," why have so many IFB churches changed dramatically in character by using CCM?

12. How has David Cloud's preaching and teaching ever weakened a Bible-believing stance in a church?

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